

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY LUSAKA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GABORONE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LILONGWE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO IMMEDIATE

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 145559

EXDIS PRETORIA PASS TO LOW

E.O. 11652:X-GDS-3

TAGS:RH, UK, PDEV

SUBJECT:RHODESIA: PROBABILITY OF MILITARY ACTION ON
ZAMBIA-RHODESIA BORDER

REF: A) LUSAKA 1991; B) STATE 141231; C) LUSAKA 1993

1. AFTER REVIEWING AVAILABLE EVIDENCE, DEPARTMENT DOES
NOT RPT NOT CONCLUDE THAT THERE IS STRONG POSSIBILITY
OF AN IMMINENT LARGE SCALE ZAPU OFFENSIVE INTO RHODESIA.

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(BY SEPARATE MESSAGE WE ARE SENDING ANALYSIS PREPARED
BY INR/RAF ON THIS TOPIC).

2. ABOVE DOES NOT, HOWEVER, PRECLUDE POSSIBILITY OF
RHODESIAN PREEMPTIVE STRIKE INTO ZAMBIA BASED ON
RHODESIAN PERCEPTIONS OF WHAT MIGHT BE DEVELOPING.

3. WE DO NOT BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD BE PRODUCTIVE FOR GRAHAM-LOW TEAM TO MAKE SPECIAL ISSUE OF POSSIBILITY OF ZAPU INCURSION OR RHODESIAN PREEMPTIVE STRIKE WITH THE SALISBURY PARTIES. HOWEVER, YOU SHOULD FEEL FREE TO MENTION IN YOUR CONVERSATIONS WITH MUZOREWA, SITHOLE AND RHODESIAN REGIME OFFICIALS OBVIOUS POINT, WHICH WE HAVE MADE BEFORE, THAT ESCALATION OF THE CONFLICT THROUGH RAIDS INTO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES BY REGIME

FORCES MAKES EVEN MORE DIFFICULT THE PROSPECT OF A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT. FACT THAT MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE WOULD INEVITABLY BEAR PART OF BURDEN FOR ATTACK ON NEIGHBORING BLACK STATE WOULD SERIOUSLY DAMAGE THEIR STANDING NOT ONLY IN FRONT LINE, BUT ELSEWHERE IN AFRICA AS WELL.

4. IN SUM, DEPARTMENT SUGGESTS ISSUE NOT BE POINTEDLY RAISED, BUT, IF APPROPRIATE IN COURSE OF DISCUSSIONS, THAT IT BE TOUCHED ON IN LOW KEY MANNER WITHOUT, OF COURSE, SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO INTELLIGENCE AVAILABLE TO US. VANCE

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